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ABSTRACT

Student organization development (SOD) is an emerging technology for conducting intentional student development through positive alteration of student organizations. One model (CORE) for conceptualizing SOD is in use at the Student Development Center of the University of Cincinnati. The CORE model to SOD is comprised of three concentric rings, the central ring containing the four CORE conditions (Cohesion, Organization, Resourcefulness, and Energy) which activate an organization to satisfactorily meet its needs. These student organizational needs, which represent mid-range goals and comprise the second ring of the model, are fund raising, maintaining attendance, recruitment, motivating members, assuming leadership, improving communication, and group unity. The outer ring of the model includes ten student development domains, i.e., forming friends; establishing identity; expressing feelings; developing personal, interpersonal, environmental, and task competencies; developing purpose; career preparation; and enjoyment. These ten domains are the long-range outcome goals of student organization development. (WAS)

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The CORE Model to Student Organization Development

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Running Head: The CORE Model

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Abstract

Student organization development ("SOD") is an evolving technology for conducting intentional student development through positive alteration of the organization itself. The CORE (Cohesion, Organization, Resourcefulness, Energy) model to SOD is specified in this article.

The CORE Model to Student Organization Development

Student organization development ("SOD") is an emerging technology for conducting intentional student development (Conyne, 1982). The student organization is the level of intervention in this technology, such as the individual student is in more typical student development work.

The theoretical origins for student organization development are found in the interrelationship between student development (e.g., Miller & Prince, 1976; Morrill, Hurst, with Oetting & others, 1980) and organization development (e.g., French, Bell, & Zawacki, 1978; Huse, 1980). The resulting merger produces a robust technology that is used to promote healthy campus student organizations and, through them, member student development.

As with any innovative approach, practice often exceeds conceptual development. Such a situation seems to apply to student organization development, sometimes leading to confusion for deliverers and recipients of the service alike. Therefore, in the remainder of this article, I describe in some detail one model for conceptualizing student organization development that is being used in the new Student Organization Development Center of the University of Cincinnati.

The CORE Model for Student Organization Development: An Overview

"CORE" is an acronym that stands for Cohesion, Organization, Resourcefulness, and Energy. These four conditions are assumed to play a central role in the functioning of student organizations. As such, the CORE model for student organization development (see Figure 1) is organized with these conditions in its center ring.

Insert Figure 1 about here

The CORE model is based on the premise that student organizations in which these conditions are adequately present generally will be able to attain group success in a range of important areas. The Group Success Ring of the model contains seven such areas that are pertinent currently to University of Cincinnati student organizations. The degree of emphasis accorded these areas is represented by their proportionate size in Ring Two of the model.

As a student organization becomes successful in meeting its identified organizational priorities, we assume in this model that individual members will be more likely to achieve personal satisfaction in a variety of student development domains. The Member Satisfaction Ring contains 10 of these domains.

Thus, the main student development path upon which this model is predicated originates with the four CORE organizational conditions. As these conditions are met, the path proceeds outward, as indicated in Figure 1 by the arrows, to promote opportunities for achieving group success, followed by those for individual member satisfaction in student development domains.

CORE Model Components

More specific definition of the model's components may provide a clearer understanding of how it can be used in student organization development. Therefore, I will define these components, beginning with the CORE conditions ring.

CORE Conditions Ring. As suggested, the four conditions of Cohesion, Organization, Resourcefulness, and Energy are the active ingredients of the model. These four conditions were selected, not only for their value as an acronym but, more importantly, because they are thought to accurately reflect and to subsume critical organizational characteristics that have seen identified previously by other theorists (e.g., Moos & Humphrey, 1974; Pascale & Athos, 1981; Weisbord, 1978). Factors included in each CORE condition follow, along with identification of a SOD intervention class mainly associated with these conditions.

Cohesion(C). Student organizations are more likely to be cohesive when they contain sufficient levels of:

.Involvement and participation

.Group affiliation and commitment

.Shared sense of mission

.Belongingness

.Helpfulness and friendship

The major class of Cohesion interventions in SOD is team building.

Organization(O). Student organizations are more likely to be organized effectively when they contain adequate:

.Purposes

.Structure

.Policies and Procedures

.Rewards

.Leadership

The major class of Organization interventions in SOD is organization design.

Resourcefulness(R). Student organizations are more likely to be resourceful when their members possess adequate:

.Student organization knowledge

.Campus knowledge

.Personal competencies

.Interpersonal competencies

.Task competencies

The major class of Resourcefulness interventions in SOD is competency enhancement.

Energy(E). Student organizations are more likely to stimulate adequate energy and get work done when their members possess sufficient:

.Positive motivation

.Innovation

.Responsibility

.Cooperation

.Adaptability

The major class of Energy interventions in SOD is attitudinal development.

The four CORE conditions interact in a student organization to stimulate and maintain current organizational equilibrium and direction Additionally, they are applied in the CORE model to guide student organization development. For example, they are used to assess organizational functioning, to design appropriate SOD interventions, and to evaluate their effectiveness. The CORE conditions are the foundation for SOD practice.

Group Success Ring. Student organization members usually will be unaware of or unconcerned with the CORE conditions, per se. Rather, they typically will be very aware of the level of success they are achieving in areas that

stem from the conditions, such as those contained in the Group Success Ring. "Our membership is dropping!" "Our leadership is failing!" "We need more money!" These exclamations realistically illustrate how members experience and express their organizational needs.

Areas included in the Group Success Ring, then, should identify the important needs (or potential successes) that student organization members report experiencing on a campus. Because these needs may vary from one campus to another, they should be determined empirically through periodic needs assessment procedures. For instance, the areas included in the Group Success Ring of Figure 1 were derived from a needs assessment survey of student organizations conducted at the University of Cincinnati (return rate of 77%, 210 respondents of 270), by Fabe and Conyne (1982). Of 16 potential need areas sampled, respondents indicated that the seven included in the model were of the most concern to them: Fund raising, keeping attendance up, recruiting members, motivating members to participate, assuming leadership, improving communication to enhance group effectiveness, and improving group unity. As mentioned earlier, the relative endorsement of each of these need areas is represented by its proportionate size in the Success Ring. Further, they implicitly correspond to an organizational need hierarchy, ranging from "survival" to "growth," as suggested theoretically by Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) and Maslow (1954).

One goal of student organization development is to help student groups to more successfully meet their identified needs. These are proximal (mid-range) goals in relation to intentional student development. Meeting these proximal goals is accomplished by first advancing the levels of CORE conditions present.

Thus, while in a "fund raising workshop" attention will be given to specific fund raising techniques, it will be given, also, to the deeper CORE conditions thought to be necessary for these fund raising techniques to be used effectively.

We have provided student organization development consultation to individually requesting organizations and through open workshops to student organization members who are interested in participating. In both cases, we have intervened at the CORE level. For instance, an open workshop on "Motivating members," a group success area, devoted considerable experiential attention to helping members get to know one another better, a cohesion-generating intervention.

Member Satisfaction Ring. This outer ring of the model contains 10 student development domains. As the CORE ring contains the active ingredients for change and the Group Success ring contains proximal organizational outcome factors, so the Member Satisfaction ring contains the distal (long-range) student development outcome domains about which we are most interested. That these student development domains are of highest priority is due to the definition of SOD itself: A technology for intentional student development that takes the student organization as target. Thus, in SOD one designs to advance student development through the organizational involvements of students.

The 10 student development domains in SOD are no different from those that other student development technologies, such as individual counseling, may seek to positively change. Rather, it is the technology and the intervention target that together provide the distinction.

The student development domains are based largely on earlier contributions by Chickering (1969), Prince, Miller & Winston (1974), and Steele (1973), with some modifications and additions. Brief definitions follow.

Forming friends. Developing increased capacity to initiate and maintain close relationships with others.

Establishing identity. Developing enhanced confidence in one's ability to sustain inner sameness and continuity.

Expressing feelings. Developing greater awareness of one's own affect and of how to appropriately express it.

Developing personal competencies. Becoming better able to attain effective, integrated, and autonomous functioning.

Developing interpersonal competencies. Becoming more able to relate with others in an interdependent and mutually satisfying manner.

Developing environmental competencies. Becoming more aware of the ecological environment and of how to responsibly and effectively act on it.

Developing task competencies. Becoming aware of necessary task demands and learning how to adequately perform them.

Developing purpose. Creating mature life style plans.

Career preparation. Designing responsible plans that integrate educational, career and life style aspects.

Enjoyment. Learning how to derive personal satisfaction and pleasure through group and organizational participation.

Whether these student development domains are causally affected through the path postulated in the CORE model is a matter requiring empirical research yet to be done. As do others in the general field of primary prevention and health promotion (e.g., Adam, 1981) we assume, at the minimum, that associative links are present. The CORE model to student organization development provides a framework for creating direct and stronger associations, if not causal

relationships, between improved student organization functioning and member advancement in student development domains.

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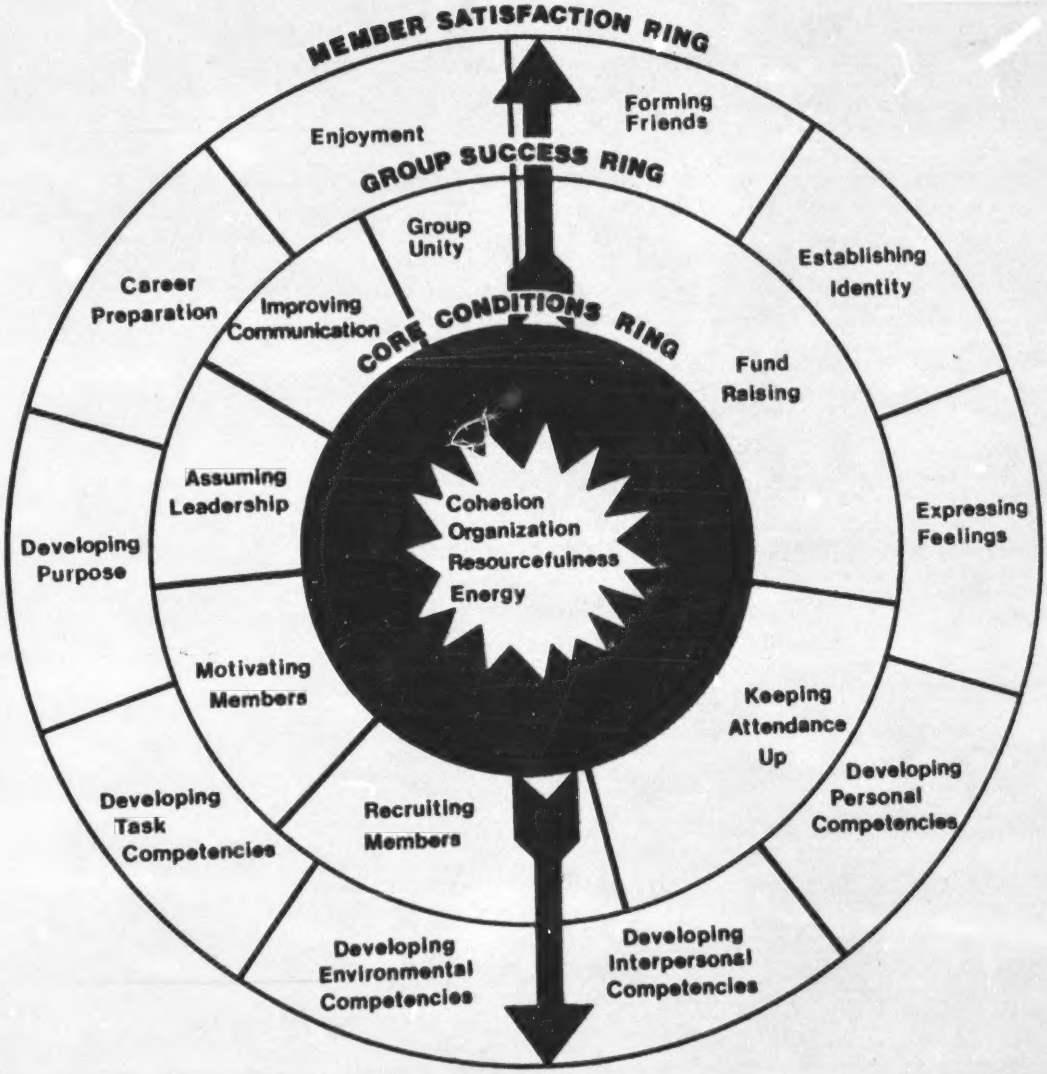
MEMBER SATISFACTION RING
GROUP SUCCESS RING
CORE CONDITIONS RING
Enjoyment
Forming Friends
Group Unity
Career Preparation
Improving Communication
Establishing Identity
Fund Raising
Assuming Leadership
Developing Purpose
Cohesion
Organization
Resourcefulness
Energy
Expressing Feelings
Motivating Members
Keeping Attendance Up
Developing Task Competencies
Recruiting Members
Developing Personal Competencies
Developing Environmental Competencies
Developing Interpersonal Competencies